THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

[ESTABLISHED 1840].

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (MATT. 6: 24).

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CELESTIAL MARRIAGE.

BY DR. JAMES E. TALMAGE, OF THE COUNCIL OF THE TWELVE OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.

"NEITHER is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord" (I. Cor. 11: 11).

This Scriptural epigram loses much of its significance if restricted to the period of mortal life. Admitting the actuality of individual existence after death, both during the interval of disembodiment and beyond in the resurrected state, we must in consistency accept the fact of the eternity of sex. Man will be man and woman woman in the hereafter as here.

Marriage as regarded by the Latter-day Saints is ordained of God and designed to be an eternal relationship. The Church affirms it to be not only a temporal and legal contract, of binding effect during the mortal life of the parties, but also a solemn covenant that shall endure beyond the grave. In the complete ordinance of marriage as administered within the Church, the man and the woman are placed under covenant of mutual fidelity and union not "until death do them part," but "for time and for all eternity."

A contract as far-reaching as this, extending not only throughout the period of earth-life, but beyond death, requires for its validation an authority superior to any that can be originated by human enactment; and such authority is found in the Holy Priesthood, which, given of God, is eternal.

Only as God delegates authority to man, with promise that administration under that authority shall be acknowledged in heaven, can any contract be made in this world and be of assured validity after the death of the parties concerned. Marriage is

properly authorized by legal statute: and every contract of matrimony entered into as the law provides is honorable, and unless dissolved by the operation of law is effective during the life of the respective parties thereto. But it is beyond the power of man to legislate for eternity.

This is made plain in a revelation given to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1843, part of which follows:

"All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations, that are not made, and entered into, and sealed, by the Holy Spirit of Promise, of him who is anointed, both as well for time and for all eternity, and that too most holy, by revelation and commandment * * * are of no efficiency, virtue or force, in and after the resurrection from the dead; for all contracts that are not made unto this end, have an end when men are dead * * * And everything that is in the world, whether it be ordained of men, by thrones, or principalities, or powers, or things of name, whatsoever they may be, that are not by me, or by my word, saith the Lord, shall be thrown down, and shall not remain after men are dead, neither in nor after the resurrection, saith the Lord your God" (Doctrine and Covenants 132: 7-13).

In application of this principle and law to the covenants of matrimony, the revelation continues:

"Therefore, if a man marry him a wife in the world, and he marry her not by me, nor by my word; and he covenant with her so long as he is in the world, and she with him, their covenant and marriage are not of force when they are dead, and when they are out of the world; therefore, they are not bound by any law when they are out of the world."

This holy order of matrimony, involving covenant and blessing for both time and eternity, is distinctively known in the Church as Celestial Marriage, and is administered to those only who are adjudged to be of worthy life, eligible for admission to the House of the Lord; for this sacred ordinance, together with others of eternal validity, may be solemnized only within the Temples reared and dedicated for such exalted service.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, however, sanctions and acknowledges legal marriages for mortality alone, and solemnizes such unions, as the secular law provides, between parties who do not enter the Temple, or who voluntarily choose the lesser and temporal order of matrimony. The ordinance of Celestial Marriage comprises and includes marriage for time, and is therefore administered to none who are not legally eligible to marry according to the law of the land.

Marriage that shall be valid after death must be solemnized here, as must all other ordinances required of men in the flesh, and that under the authority given of God for earthly administration. The resurrected state of those, otherwise worthy, who

are wedded for mortality alone and that under laws created by man, is set forth in both ancient and modern Scriptnre as that of angels or ministers, unblessed by eternal increase:

"For these angels did not abide my law, therefore they cannot be enlarged, but remain separately and singly, without exaltation, in their saved condition, to all eternity, and from henceforth are not Gods but are angels of God, for ever and ever" (Doctrine and Covenants 132: 17).

TOMMY BUCKUP.

As the time draws near for my return to "my home in the mountains," a desire comes over me, to leave on record an exhortation to the saints and friends of my acquaintance. And, as I hope what I say may be of use to others also, I will try to make it brief enough to be published in the *Star*.

The writer has been asked by friends, more than once, "What do your initials T. B. stand for?" and he has answered (half in earnest), "Tumbling Blunderhead." Pardon me for using myself as an illustration; I am willing to be made an example of, for the benefit of others.

Naturally impetuous, with a hasty temper, I have often done things on the impulse of the moment, for which I was sorry immediately afterward. My sarcastic tongue often "slips the bridle," and in consequence, I am frequently asking forgiveness. I have been with you in weakness, yet, with a desire to do good to everyone of you. Will you forgive my blunders in word and deed?

One night while lying awake between midnight and dawn, (a habit that is growing upon me—when I have my best thoughts) as I reviewed the many times I had stumbled out of the "narrow way," but up to this time, had always tried to get back into the path as quickly as possible, the determination came to me, to change the meaning of those initials from Tumbling Blunderhead to Tommy Buckup. You may have heard the saying, "John Bull does not know when he is beaten;" well I am thankful that my parents were born in England, (and just as thankful that I was born in America) and that I have that "John Bull" blood in me, to get up and try again, no matter how many times I stumble and fall because of my own weakness, or am knocked down by the mistakes and weakness of others.

My admonition to you is, "go thou and do likewise"; that is, get back into the path as quickly as possible. It does not mean that you should give way to stumbling just for the sake of getting up again; not at all. It is much better to avoid mistakes, for every time you stumble out of the path, you lose ground. What I wish most to impress upon you is: if you, through your own weakness,

or someone else's mistake, should step out of the narrow way, I pray you get back as soon as possible, because the longer you remain out the farther you get behind. The work of the Lord does not halt for any man or woman to "catch up." What a splendid thing it would be for every one of us to live—actively, positively live, in "The Everlasting Now." "Work while it is called to-day, for the night cometh wherein no man can work." It is dangerous to procrastinate the day of our repentance, and continue to drift in the boat of what we once did, toward the falls of what we are going to do (sometime).

Did Elder Somebody once say or do something that you thought was wrong? Well, was it wrong, or was it just you that thought so? Remember, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." "Evil is to him who evil thinks." But, suppose it *was* wrong, was not he human? But here is the question that concerns you, Did you stumble over his mistake, and fall overboard, vowing that you never would "go to school" anymore? And after you had fallen out of the boat, did you refuse the help of the elders to get back into it, and are you still floating around on the sea of life like a ship without a rudder?

Did you quit going to your "room" some years ago, or soon after Elder Jones went home, because some person told you that Sister So-and-so said that you just went to the room because young Elder Smith would stay a few minutes after meeting and talk with you? Or, was it because Elder Brown spent a few minutes talking to some other sisters? Or, do you continue to pout about some other little mistake, some slighting remark, or what not, that some one thoughtlessly made? And have you gone back to your tea, beer, or tobacco? Have you ceased to pay your tithes and offerings, and neglected your prayers and meetings? If so, you are missing all the happiness and the blessings which those enjoy who forgave the offenses of their brethren and sisters, and have gone humbly onward, striving day by day to improve their past record, add to their faith in, and knowledge of, the gospel, and thus have increased power to live it; and who see the glorious sunshine beyond the present dark clouds. I leave you to picture the final disappointment and misery of those who have once "tasted of the heavenly gift" and then forsaken it.

"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine," will apply to every commandment the Lord has given. No one can know the benefits of prayer who does not pray. No man or woman can know what consolation and strength are received by going "to the house of prayer upon my holy day," without going there. Only those who keep the Word of Wisdom can know the strength of body and vigor of mind which are received through doing it. Can those who do not pay an honest tenth to the Lord expect that the windows of heaven will be opened and a great blessing poured out upon them? No, no! It is those who *do* the

will of the Father, that *know* of the doctrine. Those who do the work get the pay. Our heavenly Father is a just pay-master.

Brother, buck up! Sister, buck up! Friends, buck up! "Seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; ask and ye shall receive;" but do these things in the way appointed by the Lord.

"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?". "But be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

This is my parting admonition and testimony to you all, and I am not ashamed to sign my full name to it.

JAMES THOMAS BULMER MASON.

A LETTER TO A SOLDIER BOY.

THE following letter to a soldier boy in one of the training camps of the United States was written by Mr. Jenkin Lloyd Jones, Editor of *Unity*. It is copied from the *Christian Work*:

"My dear Nephew:

"Ever since I heard of your call to the colors of your country, I have had a letter to you on my heart and in my mind, but the preoccupations of the hour have delayed the writing until this moment.

"You know how deeply I regret this war, how profoundly I believe that there is a better way of settling international differences than by an appeal to force, as there is surely a better way of settling differences between individuals than to 'fight it out.'

"Even now I have not given up hope that the warring nations will cease this mad plunge at each other's throats, and that they will be brought by consultation, conference, diplomacy and legislation to a settlement that will leave them in a condition to make future war less possible.

"But you have been called and there is but one line of action for you, and that is to make such good use of your time that you will be worth more to yourself and country for your experience in the army. An experience is before you through which I passed over fifty years ago, so I write you of what I know. The career of a soldier is one that will either make or break you. If you can hold hard on to your higher resolutions, be true to your rich inheritance in blood, training, and associations, the experiences that await you, the severities as well as the pleasures that are before you, will build you up, give you that accumulation of

life which we call character; it will make a man of you. But it is for me to tell you that you will be exposed to exceptional temptations, and that you will be constantly in the presence of many influences that will tend to pull you down.

* * * *

"But, my boy, I want to be more specific. I know that the four great dangers of military life, whether in times of peace or war, are drink, gambling, sensuality, and vulgarity. Fortunately the drink danger is being rapidly reduced, the temptations in this direction are being eliminated so far as the government can control it. I cannot believe that you will be even touched by this temptation. But there is the attendant temptation of the cigarette, the cigar, and tobacco in all its forms. Tobacco is always a menace to physical strength, and a stain on one's personal purity. I hope and believe that this temptation will not reach you.

"Gambling is the vice of the indolent, the besetting temptation of the man away from home. At the near end it seems so innocent, 'just to pass away the time, you know,' but at the far end it leaves the character undermined. I recall the pay days in the army with a sadness that amounts to horror. How quickly was the slender salary gone, how empty and ashamed did it leave the boys who had worked so hard for so little money and had nothing to show for it.

"But the most vicious temptation that besets the soldier is the temptation of the brothel, the awful penalty of which every soldier knows, and still the armies and navies of all countries are rotten with the taint that comes from the diseases incident to a reckless life. Here knowledge will not save you. The horrible story of physical disease and decay is known to every soldier boy, and still he is not safe. Only the fortifications of conscience, an active moral sense, a loyalty to mother, sister, and the woman some day to be claimed as wife, will help hold in times of temptations and the opportunities that follow the soldier. Here is where your religious training, your clean inheritance, will come to your support. You have many helpful memories, you have high friends who trust you and will await your return with confidence.

"There is one thing more I want to speak of, and that is the vulgar tongue. The 'cuss' words that are bandied about so flippantly are not so much evidence of degradation as they are of thoughtlessness. They indicate an empty mind, a lack of refinement. Far worse, to my thinking, than the flippant use of sacred words, the name of deity or of devils, is the vulgar speech, the coarse tongue that is apt to beset a company of men who are continuously removed from the refining presence of women, the restraining influence of mother, sisters, and wife. As I remember my own army experience I shudder at the atmosphere of filthy,

dirty speech that was so prevalent. Clean words, pure language, are related to clean life and high ideals. Beware even of the disintegrating power of the many slang words. The good custom of old-fashioned mothers who scrubbed the tongue with soap and water, that had been guilty of using 'dirty words,' should be remembered by the soldier boy. Keep your mouth clean and your life will escape the stain.

"But I must not make my letter too long. You are going away a boy; you will come back a man. This soldier's life has been thrust upon you; may you come back to prove that it has been an ennobling discipline to you, a training school for citizenship. God grant that you may never need to know the terrible trials of battlefield and hospital, but even should they be your lot, remember that you will come back to the high service of devoted citizenship. As life goes on, you will realize with me that it is easier to do one's duty with the bullet than with a ballot, and it is through the ballot that the cause of democracy is ultimately to triumph.

"I hope you will feel free to write me when the Spirit moves. Always with love, great sympathy and confidence,

"Your 'Uncle Jenk.'"

BOOK OF MORMON PRESENTATION.

President James Gunn McKay, of the London conference, reports that he and Elder Herbert P. Haight, on January 21st, 1918, made a trip to Feltham and presented the Court that sat upon the case of President William T. Hawkes, of the North London branch, with twelve copies of the Book of Mormon and an equal number of copies of a *Brief History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.* The court-room was well filled when President McKay formally presented the Court with these books. The incident, our correspondent observes, is quite a unique event in the history of the Book of Mormon.

To this interesting item of news the information may be added that, in the year 1842, copies of the Book of Mormon were presented to Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort, by Elder Lorenzo Snow, who presided over the London conference at that time; and also that on the 22nd of September, 1897, the seventieth anniversary of the day on which the Prophet Joseph received the plates, a richly-bound copy of that sacred volume, encased in a casket of Utah onyx, was presented to King Oscar II., by Elder Janne M. Sjodahl, at a special audience in the royal palace at Stockholm, on the occasion of the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the accession of King Oscar to the thrones of the two kingdoms on the Scandinavian peninsula.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 31, 1918.

EDITORIAL.

ELDER HYRUM M. SMITH SUDDENLY CALLED.

THE Latter-day Saints in the European mission, and especially in Great Britain, will learn with emotion and deep-felt sorrow of the sudden death of Elder Hyrum M. Smith, of the Council of Twelve. The message of his demise reached us on the morning of the 26th of this month, in a cablegram from the President's office, Salt Lake City. The cause of death was appendicitis. Further particulars will be given as soon as received. May the loved ones whom he leaves behind receive comfort, during this hour of great trial, from the Master whom he has so faithfully served.

GEORGE F. RICHARDS.

THOUGHTS CONCERNING PRAYER.

IN the Word of God, we are commanded to pray. Promises of great blessings accompany this command. "Men ought always to pray," our Lords says, and Paul admonishes the Thessalonians to "pray without ceasing;" but we are also given to understand that prayer is not in vain. All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." That is the divine promise to God's prayerful children.

Prayer is a request at the throne of God for His favors. But it is more than that. It is also a means by which we express our reverence and love for our heavenly Father, and His Son, our Savior. Prayer conveys to Him our gratitude for His mercies and loving-kindness; our submission to His will and authority; our confidence in His care over us, and our penitent regret for our shortcomings and failures. It is a means whereby we communicate with our Father in heaven on all subjects of concern to us, while sojourning on this earth, where so many trials and difficulties meet us. We cannot do without prayer. A prayerless man or woman is one who has the mistaken idea that mortals can pass through life without God and yet reach happiness and exaltation hereafter. This cannot be. We might as well expect progress and advancement of a corpse as spiritual development from a soul that does not reach out toward God in prayer. "Lord, teach us to

pray," is the desire of all true disciples. David in his royal palace found time to pray "evening, and morning, and at noon," and to "cry aloud," and Daniel in Babylon refused to cease praying though death was the penalty. So important is prayer. We may not know much about theology, but if we have learned to pray and to expect an answer to our prayers, we have a firm foundation for that faith which brings salvation and life eternal.

When our Lord taught His people to pray, He taught them that God is a person, and not an impersonal force or an abstract principle; and not only that, but that His relationship to us is that of a Father who has the welfare of His children at heart. He taught us the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. He taught us that God is near us; that he is able to hear us and willing to grant our petitions and accept our expressions of reverence and gratitude. He taught us that God is the Supreme Ruler, who controls the forces of Nature and governs even the acts of men, without interfering with their free agency, so that His plans and purposes will all be accomplished.

Some have held the view that Nature is so governed by natural laws that it is beyond the control of the Creator, who neither can do anything contrary to those laws, nor has any desire to do so. In this view prayer has no place. It is unavailing. The cries of distress, the petitions for help might as well, to those who hold this opinion of God, be addressed to the inexorable elements of Nature, that carry death and destruction in their path, as to Him who, according to the Scriptures, employs those elements as His loyal messengers. To those who hold the view here referred to, prayer is but superstition.

Another view, not more Scriptural but less openly atheistic, is this, that prayer is beneficial to those who engage in such devotional exercises, even if they may not expect to receive that for which they pray. It is, they say, in the moments of the "silent thoughts" that illumination comes, and, "Who rises from his knees a better man, his prayer is answered."

This view of prayer is becoming more and more common. There is some truth in it, but only a small fraction. Prayer is communion with God, and the soul that reverently enters the sanctuary of His presence and abides there, carries the divine influence with him in his daily life. It is in the school of prayer that prophets and seers, as well as saints, are trained and moulded. It is by prayer that the mission of the Church, at home and abroad, is made a success. But it must not be forgotten that the promise has been given that God will hear and answer prayer, not only in the educational blessings accruing from spiritual exercises, but by giving us that for which we pray in faith. David knew this when he sang, "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart," and Paul's experience had taught him that God is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we

ask or think," and that he assigns as a reason why we should give glory to Him throughout all ages. It is an important truth that God answers prayer.

The instances in sacred history and in the history of the Church of Christ, proving this, are innumerable.

When Abraham asked the Lord to spare the cities of the plain, if He should find five righteous souls there, He granted that for which the father of the faithful asked.

Elijah prayed that it might not rain, and a drought lasting for three years came on the land. He prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth fruit. And he, as James tells us, was a "man subject to like passions as we are." He could do absolutely nothing towards opening or closing the fountains of water, except praying; this he did, and God heard and answered his petitions.

Daniel asked that God would reveal to him what Nebuchadnezzar had dreamt, and He did so. The prophet could do nothing whereby to obtain this knowledge. He could not even guess at it. But he could pray, and God answered the prayer.

Moses prayed, and as long as his arms were lifted to God, Israel prevailed over the Amalekites. God answered his prayer by giving the people victory.

Hezekiah, sick unto death, prayed for life, and the Lord, through the Prophet Isaiah, said to him, "I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears; behold I will heal thee * * * and I will add unto thy days fifteen years." It is a question whether this addition to his years was a blessing to him, for shortly afterwards he fraternized with Babylonian ambassadors in such a manner as to call down upon him a severe rebuke from the Lord through the prophet who had been instrumental in raising him up from his bed of sickness. But God heard and answered his prayer.

In our own day there are numerous equally remarkable instances of answers to prayer. The dispensation in which we live began, we may say, in the prayer of Joseph Smith for wisdom, that beautiful spring morning, when the Father and the Son appeared to him in effulgent glory. And the Church, from its foundation to the present day, has been fostered by the prayers of the faithful leaders and members. Joseph Smith was a man of prayer, and so were all his associates. Every Revelation he received came in answer to prayer: every step he took was guided by prayer.

The State of Utah is what it is to-day in answer to prayer. From a forbidding, sun-baked desert, that locality has been transformed into a paradise. Even the water supply has been increased with the increased growth and needs of the population, and golden grain now gladdens the eye, at harvest time, where formerly the lizzard and the snake basked undisturbed in the burning sun. How has this change been brought about? By fervent prayers and conscientious work. The "Mormons" know the value of

prayer. They have labored as if there were no virtue in praying, and they have prayed as if physical efforts were in vain. That is the whole secret of their success. God has answered their prayers and blessed the works of their hands.

And thus we know that God is not an impersonal force, without interest in the activities of the children of men; nor a Being so far away as to have no interest in our concerns, but that He is indeed an omnipresent Father, loving, tender, and solicitous for the welfare of His children.

There are, however, some conditions that we must observe, if we desire an answer to our petitions.

We must be sincere. St. James tells us that it is the *fervent* prayer of a righteous man that availeth much. God searches the heart. It is not in the words alone that the power of prayer is found, but in the sincerity of the heart.

We must be humble. That means that we must recognize our own weakness and unworthiness, and our utter dependence on our heavenly Father. The publican, who was afraid to lift his eyes to heaven and who could only say, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner," prayed acceptably, because he was humble, as well as sincere. Isaiah had the same spirit of humility when, in the presence of Jehovah, he exclaimed, "Woe is me, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips."

We must be persistent. Our Lord teaches this lesson in the parable of the unjust judge, who said, "Because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me"; and also in the story of the man who refused to lend his friend a loaf of bread at an inconvenient hour, and of whom our Lord says, "Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many [loaves] as he needeth." This shows the importance of importunity in prayer.

We must be submissive. If we are submissive, we desire that our prayers, both private and public, be dictated by the Holy Spirit. This is of great importance. It is the Spirit that gives light to every man, and the Lord tells us (Doctrine and Covenants 46: 30) that, "He that asketh in the Spirit, asketh according to the will of God, wherefore it is done even as he asketh." Paul expresses the same thought in these words, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8: 26); that is to say, we must let the Holy Spirit so fill our minds that they become the very organs through which He addresses the Father, be it words uttered, or in thoughts and longings beyond human speech. In this frame of mind, we can at all times say, with our Lord, "Not my will but thine be done."

We must be obedient. God taught this truth to the Saints in this dispensation, when He said of them, "Behold, I say unto you,

there were jarrings, and contentions, and envyings, and strifes, and lustful and covetous desires among them; therefore by these things they polluted their inheritances. They were slow to hearken unto the voice of the Lord their God, therefore the Lord their God is slow to hearken unto their prayers, to answer them in the day of their trouble. In the day of their peace they esteemed lightly my counsel; but in the day of their trouble, of necessity they feel after me" (Doctrine and Covenants 101: 6-8). God is full of mercy and compassion, but it is the obedient child that has the first claim on His blessings.

Finally, we must pray in faith and in the name of Jesus Christ.

Our Lord said to His disciples, "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive." And again, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do."

To ask in faith is to ask because we believe that God is able and willing to grant that for which we pray. To ask in the name of the Redeemer is to urge His merits, His love, as the ground on which we expect that our prayers will be heard and answered. We are pleading His atoning work and His office as our Mediator as the foundation for our petitions.

Such prayers are a power. Paul constantly asked his brethren to pray for him. He directed that prayers be offered up for all men, for kings and all in authority. In our own day, the Lord has commanded us to "pray always"; to pray privately and publicly; to pray, lest we fall into temptation; to pray that we may have wisdom and understanding; to teach the children to pray, and to pray and not faint. Prayer is indeed a mighty force. Mary, queen of Scotland, was right when she said she feared the prayers of John Knox more than an army, for armies have been overcome by prayer, and militarism will finally be conquered by the Church of Christ.

Prayer is a source of strength in present needs, and a source of confidence and faith for the future. Rising from our prayers, we can say with the Psalmist of old, "The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."

J. M. S.

THE outward fruits of success are not always within our reach, no matter how strenuous our struggles to pluck them; but that inward strength, of which all forms of outward prosperity are but visible evidences, lies within the grasp of every true worker. Fidelity, skill, energy—the noble putting forth of one's power in some worthy form of work—never fail of that unfolding of the whole man in harmonious strength which is the only ultimate and satisfying form of success.—H. W. MABIE.

THE way to avoid great faults is to beware of small ones.

CONFERENCE APPOINTMENTS.

Birmingham	Sunday, March 3, 1918.
Bristol	,, ,, 10, ,,
Hull	,, ,, 17, ,,
Irish	,, ,, 24, ,,
Leeds	,, ,, 31, ,,
Liverpool	,, April 7, ,,
London	,, ,, 14, ,,
Manchester	,, ,, 21, ,,
Newcastle	,, ,, 28, ,,
Norwich	,, May 5, ,,
Nottingham	,, ,, 12, ,,
Scottish	,, ,, 19, ,,
Sheffield	,, ,, 26, ,,

THE HEAVENS AGAIN OPENED.

In a magazine left by British soldiers in a German dugout which had been captured on the Western front, I found some verses by Ella Wheeler Wilcox, in which the poetess prays the Lord to open the door that swings between this world and the worlds beyond, and let it stand ajar.

"Only a moment—nay, not that—one
Second only, Lord,
Would mean to earth's suffering hosts,
Pain's ultimate reward."

In these verses Mrs. Wilcox expresses a world's want. It is the heart-breaking cry of nations plunged into the indescribable horrors of warfare. It is the pitiful cry from thousands of homes which mourn the loss of loved ones, who have given up their lives on the blood-soaked battlefields of Europe. Out of the darkness comes the almost despairing cry, "Lord, open the heavens that we may see. Flash in a vision upon our eyes, if only for one second, so that we may see our folly and weakness, and so that we may receive the assurance that there is a God of love and mercy." Oh, when will the world realize that the long-looked-for ray of light has already pierced the earth's darkness, that the heavens have been opened and the glorious message of salvation given to the nations of the earth; that a Prophet has been raised up in this last dispensation to proclaim the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ in all its fulness?

Stephen declared that he had seen the heavens opened. He was stoned to death. Joseph Smith, in these last days, has declared that a glorious vision was given to him: a vision of God the Father, and His Son, Jesus Christ, and yet, the world in general

will not believe, but are still asking God to flash a vision upon their eyes.

Finding the verses quoted, under such circumstances and in the midst of all the misery and horrors of warfare, I could not but feel deeply impressed by them, and to-day, when I am back again in a Scottish hospital, I desire to testify to the saints that that prayer has been answered, and that the heavens have been opened and the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ revealed to the people of the earth. I often look back upon my experiences, and I am grateful to my heavenly Father for His loving and protecting care over me on the battle-fields. I have faced death many times and have learned to look almost with indifference upon the bodies of brave men who have fallen around me. I have had many truly miraculous escapes from death, and, to crown all, I was wounded twenty-four hours before I was to have taken part in one of the fiercest engagements that have been fought on the western front. From other wounded men who came down later, I learned how my comrades had been mowed down by artillery and machine-gun fire, and I was thankful indeed that I had been spared the horrors of this particular battle.

Although I have been away from the saints for fifteen months, the hardships of active service have strengthened my testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and given me a stronger determination to fulfil my mission on earth. I earnestly pray that the time may speedily come when the sun will shine upon a world that has been brought to its senses and wherein peace reigns, and the people have come to realize the glorious vision which they were too blind to see, and have come to a realization of the divinity of the mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and are preparing their hearts for the coming of Jesus Christ.

Leicester. G. E. GENT.

OBEDIENCE.

To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams (I. Sam. 15: 22).

The most humble, and yielding to the divine will, was the best and purest Being who ever dwelt in mortality, viz., the Lord Jesus Christ; He in whose mouth there was found no guile; who was perfect and without blemish in all the walks of life. Humble to the utmost, He exclaimed, "I came not to do mine own will but the will of my Father who sent me."

True obedience to the commandments of God is an indication of moral courage. For instance, Latter-day Saints who have yielded obedience to the ordinance of baptism by immersion after the example given by the Savior (Matt. 3: 13-17) are frequently ridiculed by those whom they come in contact with, who, notwithstanding the Savior's words that, "Except a man be born

of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God" (John 3: 5), claim that baptism is not essential to salvation. Many have heard the gospel in its fulness and have said, "This is the truth; I must obey it or stand condemned." Others have said, "It is true, but if I obey I shall be shunned by my friends, perhaps lose my employment. It is better to reject the truth and live in peace, than to take up this cross of obedience to unpopular truth." The Prophet Isaiah foresaw the condition of the world and wrote, "The earth is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, broken the everlasting covenant." Verily, this is fulfilled.

The wisdom of man declares that baptism by immersion is not necessary, and in lieu thereof sprinkling has been instituted, although there is no passage in the Scriptures by which this change can be supported.

The law of tithing is considered obsolete, and the words of the Prophet Malachi (3: 7-10) are ignored, "Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return? Will a man rob God? Yet, ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Moral courage is required when obedience is put to the test. Are we going to give heed to the Word of God, or, are we going to hearken to the commands of men? We cannot afford to ignore the instructions God gives us through His prophets. We need the blessings; therefore, let us remember that, "There is a law irrevocably decreed in the heavens upon which all blessings are predicated," viz., Obedience.

Be obedient, I implore,
Prayerful, watchful, evermore,
And be constant unto me,
That thy Savior I may be.

South London. HENRY J. STAGG.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

Baptism.—A baptismal service was held at Leicester, Nottingham conference, on Thursday, January 17th, 1918. One applicant was baptized. President John D. Hooper officiated. The candidate was later confirmed by Elder Walton E. Bodily.

Correction.—President Stephen H. Winter writes: "The organi-

zation of the Sunday school and the performance of the baptism, which were reported in the *Millennial Star* of January 10th, 1918, as having occurred in Cardiff, took place in Bath. The baptism I reported from Bristol was performed on the 29th of December, instead of the 28th. The report we received was wrong."

Sunday School.—President James Gunn McKay and Elder Herbert P. Haight met with the saints of the Hammersmith branch, London conference, on Sunday, January 20th, 1918, and organized a Sunday school. The following-named officers were appointed and set apart: Brother Forrest Stuart, superintendent; Andre Anstasion, first assistant; Sister Gertrude Eleanor, secretary; Brother Ralph J. Pugh, theological teacher; and Sister Germaine Depassel, Primary teacher.

Branch Conference.—Two very successful sessions of a branch conference are reported by President B. W. T. Norman of the Manchester branch, Manchester conference, held on Sunday, January 20th, 1918. President Lester F. Hewlett and Elders John H. Wilding and Robert W. Cluff attended. The afternoon session was occupied in presenting the names of the authorities, and in talks by President B. W. T. Norman, Elder Robert W. Cluff and Thomas Flitcroft. The hall was crowded at the evening session. Elder John H. Wilding spoke first. Sister Flossie O. Roberts sang a solo. The remaining time was occupied by President Lester F. Hewlett.

Socials.—On January 3rd, 1918, a social of the Glasgow branch of the Church was held in their meeting hall, South Side Masonic Temple, 30 Abbotsford Place. There was a good attendance, and many friends participated in the evening's enjoyment, says President Richard C. Wilkin.

On Monday, January 7th, a combined Sunday-school and farewell social, for Elder Alma Moss, was held in the Belfast branch under the direction of the branch and Sunday-school officers. Prizes were given to some of the children, and a general good time was enjoyed.

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